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A Private
Peace-Offering,
FOR THE
DISCOVERY
AND
DISAPPOINTMENT
Of the Late
Horrid Conspiracy
Against the
KING, &c.
IN A
SERMON
Preached *July the 8th.* in *St. Hel-*
len's-Church London.

By *Henry Hesketh* Vicar there and Chaplain
to His MAJESTY.

L O N D O N,

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Lyon in *St. Paul's Church-Yard.* 1684.

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To my good Friends, the Parishioners of St. Hellens.

Gentlemen.

THIS mean discourse that you were pleased so kindly to entertain at the hearing of, and so devoutly to joyn with me in the purpose of; I offer now to you, as justly your own.

To the end, that amidst the many Honest and Loyal Addresses at present, in which good Men congratulate the safety of their Prince, and make fresh Vows of Loyalty and Service to him; we may do something to interest Religion in this affair. Not only Sacrifice to that God, from whom this safety so signally derives, but also ingage his Pro-

*vidence and blessing, for the continuance
of it, without which the utmost care and
Loyalty of Subjects are but feeble things.*

*It may serve you as a kind of Parasceve
to the great and publick Eucharist, that
(I am confident) you will shortly be called
unto; In which I shall be glad to do you
further Service, and in every thing else,
wherein I may approve my self,*

*July the 16th.
1683.*

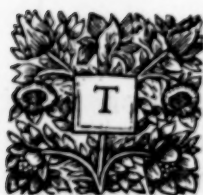
Your Servant in

the Gospel,

Hen. Hesketh.

2 Sam. 22. 51.

*He is the Tower of salvation for his King,
and sheweth mercy to his Anointed,
unto David, and to his seed for
evermore.*



HIS Song that is recorded here, and is the Eighteenth in the number of the *Psalms* (as you may see if you please to compare them together) was Old *David's* last grateful Recognition, and Song of Praise, towards the latter end of his days, when he reflected upon the many signal deliverances, and providences of God towards him.

The truth is my Brethren I can hardly reflect upon *David* either in the troubles that befell him before he came to the Crown, or the many remarkable strange deliver-

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ances that he had, both before and after; but I must presently think of our present Gracious King, and my mind naturally is running a parallel between them.

As God Almighty chose the one to be an instance of that care and providence that he hath over Kings, to the Old World: So hath he been pleased to make the other as famous an instance of the like care, to the New. And I believe future Ages will rather admire, than believe those strange and happy occurrences of his life, which we have so much cause thankfully to adore.

You will easily guess the reason why I step out of my former course and method of Preaching at this time; it is to offer up a particular sacrifice of Praise, for the happy preservation of our King, and us all too, from a sad and bloody Conspiracy, that it seems was formed against him, by unreasonable and bloody Men, whom no ties of Religion, or Nature, of Humanity or Gratitude could restrain from the most unworthy and ungrateful conspiracy against him.

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We might stay I confess, till Authority went before us, and was pleased to mark out a time for a publick Thanksgiving, as I hope e're long it will.

But certainly a double sacrifice is due now from us, if ever it were; I doubt not but all good Men have had their private Eucharists and in their closet pay'd their devoutest Praise for this mercy; and I would we should give some publick specimen of it at present too.

I cannot but think our hearts are brim full with a great sense of this mercy, I do therefore by the present discourse only strive to give vent unto them, in offering them occasion to break out into this joyful recognition: *He is the Tower of salvation to his King, and sheweth mercy unto his Anointed, unto David and his seed for evermore.*

This *Psalms* and the occasion of it, will too well suit our present purpose. The unnatural Rebellion of *Abfolom* had been lately suppressed, which was the last that ever *David* was troubled with, unless it were *Sheba's* conspiracy, which was but only the remainder and dregs of it.

And our *David* is now happily delivered from the effects of a Rebellion, either formed or fomented, by a like unnatural Son too; only so much the worse, and more Impardonable than *Absolom*, by how much his endearments have been greater, and he caressed and obliged by the passionate love, and extraordinary kindness of the most indulgent Father, from whom he never received the least displeasure, nor any effects of it, as *Absolom* before (though deservedly) had done.

I do not intend to parallel all the circumstances of both the Treasons, blessed be God, we have a better, and more grateful Theme, the Praising God for the deliverance from it, *who is a Tower of salvation unto his King, and hath shewed mercy unto his Anointed*: And to Pray that they may correspond in one circumstance also, as well as in many others, that as that was, so this may be the last, that our King ever may be disturb'd withal.

And that if any Factious and Seditious *Sheba's* shall blow up any future sparks of this (I hope I may say, extinguished flame) they may meet with *Sheba's* fate,
and

and lose those heads, that dare think an ill thought against the Lords Anointed.

This Text is a grateful acknowledgment of Gods great mercy and providence towards *David* his Anointed King over *Israel*, in which after he had reflected in the precedent Song upon his many signal deliverances, he comes in this conclusion of it, to recognize the great efficient and Author of them all, the great love, and immerited mercy of God, he is the Tower of strength to his King, 'tis he that sheweth mercy to his Anointed.---In the last verse of the 18th. *Psalms*, which I hinted before, this Song is put into the number of the *Psalms*; there is a little variation in the Phrase though not in the sense, there instead of, he is a Tower of defence to his King, it is, he giveth great deliverance to his King.

And the truth is, God was pleased to signalize his care and providence over *David*, in many great and remarkable deliverances from dangers, which no human policy could ever see a way for him to escape out of.

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My design is not to give you the History at large of *David's* great and many troubles, and his wonderful miraculous escapes out of them, though they would be an excellent foundation for what I purpose to speak to at present.

Snares and dangers awaited him almost in every place, and the Lyon and the Bear that infested his Flock in the Wilderness, were but the too true presages of those calamities and dangers that should haunt and dog himself afterwards.

Sometimes his Enemies, and sometimes his Friends are persecuting and conspiring against him; sometimes the Camp and sometimes his own house are made the scenes of his danger. Now an open Enemy invades and assaults him, and now a Treacherous Confident seeks to betray him; and last of all his own Son forms and heads a desperate Rebellion against him.

But so many as were his troubles and dangers, so many were the Acts and instances of the divine providence and interposition for him, and one as remarkable every way (or more) than the other, till
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at last you read of his giving him rest from all his Enemies on every side, and of every kind too, and giving him leisure to pass his old Age in comfort and safety, attending quietly the duties of Religion, and his devotion to that God, whose mercies had been so great and extraordinary towards him, into whose hands at last he resigned his devout Soul, in comfort and in peace.

But the insisting at large upon these things would prevent me wholly from what I chiefly purpose at this time, which I intend to dispatch in these three things.

1. Instance the care and providence of God towards Religious Kings and Governours, and inquire a little into the reasons of it.

2. Remark this care and providence towards our King.

3. Make some deductions and inferences, by way of application.

1. The 1st. is to assert the care and providence of God over good Kings; for though it be in the Text in the singular number, *He is the Tower of Salvation to his King*, yet we shall find, *Pf. 144. 16.* that

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it is equally in the Plural Number; it is he that giveth salvation unto Kings, as well as he that delivereth *David* from the peril of the Sword,

It is piously acknowledged by our Church, in one of the Collects appointed upon *November 5th.* that God in all Ages hath shewed his power and mercy in the miraculous and gracious Deliverances of his Church, and in the Protection of Righteous and Religious Kings, from the wicked Conspiracies, and malicious Practices of their Enemies.

And it is certainly true, and spoken upon very good reasons, and should we revolve the Stories of all Ages of the World, we should scarce fail of meeting with many instances of this nature, in every Age of it. It cannot be expected that I should stay to examine these at present, and to trace these mighty providences of God, through the several Periods of the World; there are enough in the sacred History of your Bibles, and there are more in the Histories of all Religious and Christian Nations, and out of them men may furnish themselves with instances enough.---Though the truth is this
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Generation hath seen enough, to supersede its need of looking after any more.

I shall therefore proceed to inquire a little into the great reasons of this providence, and examine what probably may be the causes, why God is pleased to give such specimens of his guarding of them, and care over them.

1. And First, this doubtless proceeds from his great care and respect to the societies of Men, and their happiness in the World.

It is most certain, Government is one of the greatest blessings that can be enjoyed by Men here, and both the reason of the thing, and the general consent of Men, prove, and allow it to be so; and in elder times those have been honoured as Gods, that have been happily instrumental in reducing men to it, all mortal honors have been accounted too mean for them, and too much below the blessings enjoyed by them.

And it is as certain, that Monarchy is the Best form of Government in it self; and
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that Kings are the most regular conservators of Order and Government, as hath not long since been proved in this place.

So that my Brethren, Kings are really for the good and happiness of the people, and the good of the one is included in, and greatly dependent upon the other, and whatever we may think of their grandure, or how much soever we may stare at their Pomp and Glory, it is we that really gain by all, and the World is preserv'd and kept from Barbarisme, and Confusion by their means.

And because God loves the Societies of Men, and delights in the peace and order of them, therefore he is so tender and careful of Kings, and so seldom lets violence touch and prevail against them; and indeed we may truly say, he never doth this, but when the wickedness of People and Nations is grown high, and Clamorous, and even extorts vengeance from Heaven, it is the sins of the People, which are to be punished, that provoke God at any time to pull down his wall.

wall of protection about good Kings.

2. Because Government is his own Institution, and Kings his own immediate substitutes and delegates.

I do not think it needful to examine the accounts that have been given of the original of Government, by the great factor for Atheism in this Nation, which have been so greedily sucked in by so many of the young Gentry of this Age, and indeed almost all orders of Men, which have tainted the ancient Loyalty of this People to such a monstrous degree; I have done this also not long ago in this place.

We that are at all conversant in the Holy Scriptures, or indeed have any becoming thoughts of the power and providence of God, his care over the World, and his concern for the welfare and good of it; may be assured, that Government is Gods own institution and ordinance, as *St. Paul* calls it; that he hath both instituted the thing, and fitted Men for it; that Government is a Divine gift, as

the same *St Paul* calls it, and that he teacheth Kings and Princes wisdom, and that by him they Reign, as *David*, and *Solomon* both tell us.

So that Kings are immediately constituted by God, they are his Viceroyes, therefore he is called King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and they are often in the Holy Scripture called Lords and Gods, because they bear the characters of his Power and Greatness, are little Images of his Sovereignty, and the conveighers of blessings to Men, which are not below the greatness of a God to give.

Therefore they are called the Anointed of the Lord, in this and many other Texts of Scripture, and we may observe that as the Scriptures intitle God more especially to a care and regard of them, so they seem to take notice of that extraordinary awe and veneration to them, that God hath implanted Naturally in the breasts of all Men, to keep them at a due distance from them, and to restrain all thoughts of violence against them.

And

And all this to keep up, and to give credit to his own institutions among Men; yea to hedge up his own honour and keep Men from any intrenching upon it, for he is concerned in his own Image, and what dishonour or wrong is offer'd to them, redounds in some measure to himself, as we have always seen it *de facto* true, those never much fear God, that honour not their King, the Church and the Throne always suffer together, and Traytors and Rebels were never very Religious, nor can be, though it must be confessed none make greater pretence to it, that pretence of duty to God may take off the guilt of Disloyalty to the King, though there is not an instance of more wretched and fulsome hypocrisie in the World.

3. Another cause perhaps may be, the extraordinary and difficult task that God hath laid upon them.

What vain men may think I know not, but certainly to Govern is the most difficult province in the World. Obedience is a thing

thing easily learn'd, it lies in a narrow compass, but to command and order well is extreamly hard, Every one that is in any little measure of Power finds it so, not a Master of a Family but is sensible of it.

How easily then may we guess, what a task he hath upon him, that is to Rule us all. Man is through his Vices and Debaucheries a very wild ungovernable creature, and perhaps the most Salvage may better and easier be kept in awe, though there is difference among Men, and I wish he knew not too well who are the fiercest.

The multitude hath in the Symbolls of all wise Nations been compared to a very fierce and wild Beast, that is not easily Governed, and that expression in *Psf. 65. 7.* goes higher, where the madness of the People is compared to the raging of the Sea, and the same Power said to rule the one that stilleth the other, and if so, we need nothing more to tell us, how difficult Government is.

And

And therefore as where God gives much he requires more; so where he requires much he gives more; I mean proportions his care and providence, his grace and mercy, answerable to the duty that he hath Imposed, and because Kings carry heavier burthens of care and trouble than other Men, therefore is the Divine care and protection greater over them, and more concerned for them.

4. Especially 4ly. . Because they are exposed unto greater dangers than other Men; the rising Sun exhales and draws up many vapours, and there never were, or will want those that will look upon Kings with an evil Eye.

As long as there are Devils in Hell, who delight in, and will be contriving the misery and confusion of Men, so long will they be standing at the hands of Kings, and endeavouring to stir up evil Men against them.

And so long as Pride and Ambition, Covetousness and discontent find places to harbour in, there will not want Tray-
tours.

tours and Rebels, Men that will envy Powre and greatness, and will be contriving means by which to surprize and graspe them into their own hands; when Men have once given entertainment to such lusts as these, and committed themselves to the conduct of them; a Crown is a glittering temptation, and such as they cannot resist, their minds will run upon greatness, and will ever be beating to find out ways to it, and whatever appears with a promise or shew of success, shall certainly find ready admittance and be entertained, and persued how unjust or violent, how bloody and mischievous soever it may be. For a Crown will legitimize all crimes to get it, and greatness will atone for any evil, that tends to the compassing of it.

This is a sad and evil return I confess, that Kings have for all their labour and trouble, their watchings and cares, but it is such, as considering the lusts of Men, they will never miss of.

And

And therefore the Divine providence is the greatlier concerned for them, and knowing their dangers doth more carefully guard and super-intend them, just as in the case of just and good Men, if God permit evils to haunt them, or overtake them, he either doubles his care, or their comforts; as their troubles abound, so their consolations from God abound also.

So it is that in this case, the more dangerous and hazardous that their condition is, the more doth the Divine Providence take care of them, and the more signally remark it self, in their protection and preservation.

2. And these reasons now will not only be accounts of the thing in general, but especially of the preservations of our gracious King, Gods providence to whom I have promised to remark in the second place.

It is plain how all these reasons centre in our case, never did a Nation enjoy more by a King than ours hath done by this, and perhaps had one of

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any other temper Govern'd in our times, our case had had a worse Crisis, never were People more happy, then we might be under him if we please, and were not the fault our own.

Never was it more remarkably true, that the Powers that are over us, are set over us by God, then in our case, his Restauration being a Miracle in the sight of all the World.

Never had a Prince a harder task, then ours hath had, coming to Govern a People, that are not only to their shame, said to be more ungovernable, more fickle and changeable than other Nations, but being broken into Factions and Differences, and leven'd with the loose principles of Rebellion and Usurpation as we were, and we see how close these tinctures and ill principles yet stick to too many Mens minds, and that length of time heightens and rankles them, rather then heal and carry them off.

And I would it could not be said as truly too, that never was a Prince exposed

posed to more dangers , and troubles than he hath been.

For should we recollect the past passages of his life, and soberly make remarks upon the same, I do not well know whether we should more admire his fate, and wonder that so many dangers and adversities should concenter to spend their spight against one Man, or that providence and care of almighty God, that hath still brought him through, and delivered him out of them all.

I have a Copious Theam here before me, and should I enter upon it, could not want matter for a long discourse ; should I either play the Historian , or the Oratour , go either to recount the dangers and deliverances, that have be-fell him, or to enhance and heighten the circumstances of Gods extraordinary care and providence in them ; here were a large field before me for both , in which I should run my self out of breath, sooner then exhaust the subject.

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But I must forbear this now, out of a necessary respect to the time, and your patience, and I do it with the less regret, and the more contentedly, because it is a known subject, in which every one that hears me can prevent me, and enlarge it sufficiently himself, and I do not doubt, but we shall have an occasion ere long, publickly to do the same.

So great a mercy will not pass I hope without a publick and solemn recognition, among those that seem so sensible of the greatness of it; I doubt not but there would have been mock thanksgivings enough, had these black designs succeeded, and God would have been intitled to it, and his providence magnified in it, as we have seen it done in almost as bad instances.

I am sure it is more just in this, the Lords hand hath been visibly stretched out in this deliverance, and in many others, and it ought to be marvellous in our eyes; to this we may safely intitle this deliverance, and magnifie his mercy in it
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without any fear of mocking and affronting him to his face, as we have seen men too often have done.

The truth is, his life hath been a continual Scene of providence, and danger even from his Cradle, and I am apt to think (as I told you before) when future Ages shall view the Acts of it, they will either conclude them some extravagant Sallies of Historians, or think him to have been a person, whom Providence hath selected out of the Masse of mankind, to be an instance what great things God can do for those that trust in him, and to shew how careful he is of the Lives and Persons of those Princes, to whom Religion and his honour is dear as their own Crowns; as it is at present.

These providences and cares have been freshly instanced very lately, in a deliverance from a Conspiracy and Treason, hatched by those Men, that no Bands, no kindneses, no endearments, no Oaths, no pretences of Protestant Religion, could restrain from the most
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Barbarous intendments against him, against us, and against all, that can be thought Dear and Valuable unto Christian Men.

And therefore our utmost gratitude is due, both upon our love to him, and to our selves too.

All our dearest interests, are bound up in his life, and next to Gods Protection and Blessing owe their stabiliment and continuance to it; and it seems our Enemies think so too, and therefore go to wound us through his sides, and to enslave us, by his destruction.

Oh! what cause have we then to be as sensible of this deliverance, as if our own selves had lain bound under the fatal Knife, and our own Throats immediately rescued from it.

3. But that I intend among the inferences and uses that I purpose to make of this discourse; which was the 3^d. thing proposed.

1. And 1st. I would improve it to the discouragement of all Traytours, and ill minded persons against him. To

To let them see how hopeless and improbable, all their wicked attempts against him are like to be.

It may be urged (blessed be God) now upon second causes and considerations, as well as upon Gods providence.

God be thanked the case is alter'd from what it was not long ago,---when one in Print durst advise him to lay down his Government, as the only expedient to his safety.

Mens Eyes are open'd, and cleared from those mists that cunning Men have been casting before them, they see into the truth of things in a great measure; and I hope will in a short time see much more.

There is no rival power now to beard Majesty, and confront it, and hector it into a consent to them in every thing they please.

The power and strength of the Nation is in his own and his true confidents hands, and may it ever continue so; and in all probability we are safe,

safe, and may defie all Plots, and Insurrections, especially if Men continue that care, that (God be thanked) they have of late, almost out done their Enemies in.

But unless God watch the City, the Watchmen watch but in vain; and without his Protecting the King, all Guards are weak and feeble things.

And therefore I would press the discouragement, upon that account, let Men consider what a darling of Providence hitherto he hath been, and how probably all attempts against him will be vain, that hitherto have been so, though never so closely and cunningly and probably contrived.

God hath delivered him, and doth deliver him, and we have cause to hope, as well as Pray, that he will still continue to deliver him.

2. Which is a 2^d. proper Inference, and suggests a good Christian Duty to us at present; not only to Praise his Name, give him our devoutest and most enlarged thanks

thanks for all his Mercies, for his former deliverance, and for this last almost greatest of all.

But to make it our daily Prayer, that he will still continue his hedge of Protection about him, depute his Holy Angel still to guard and defend him, scatter all his Enemies that delight in violence, and Blood, suffer no weapon that is formed against him to prosper, but still follow him with blessing and loving kindness.

The Church directs us well in this case, it is a stated part in our Liturgy. And I pray God, its doing, and teaching us to do this so often, be not one present (as well as our Royal Martyr'd Master thought it to be one former) great exception against it.

3. And lastly that we utterly abhor all such practices, and rid our selves of all those disloyal Antimonarchical principles, that naturally lead and dispose to them.

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Unless we would be found to be of the Number of those that fight against God, and go to pull down that, which he hath allways shewed himself so dear and tender of.

I hope all honest Men, will begin to be wise, open their Eyes now, and wilfully shut them no longer against plain and palpable evidences.

Permit themselves to be wheedled no longer into Rebellion and Treason, under pretences of Loyalty, nor believe those Men to be the best Subjects that make such a noise with their Loyalty to, and concern for the King.

That they will not Sully the honour of the Protestant Religion any more, with Faction against the Church, or Treason against the State.

They have been often told of the danger of such principles, and been warned of the sad effects that they would lead Men into; I hope they will now begin to consider things truly, and not ruin their Souls and Bodies too, their Estates, Rela-

Relations, and all that depend upon them, by things that both God and Man abhor.

But hereafter joyn with us in the Communion of that Church, and Religion, that teacheth truly our duty both to God and *Cæsar*, that establissheth Subjection upon true Christian, firm principles that will not fail, nor will ever be Tainted with any suspicion of Plotts and Treasons.

By compliance honestly with which, we and our King shall both be safe, live happily, and piously here, and both be translated to eternal security and happiness hereafter. To which God of his Infinite Mercies bring us all, for Christ Jesus sake. *Amen.*

F I N I S.